

2016 Employer Survey of First Degree Graduates, Class of 2014

September 2016



Between July and August 2016, employers of First Degree Graduates were invited to participate in an online survey administered by Qualtrics.

The survey asked employers about the graduates' work experience, academic preparation, skill sets, and performance on the job.

Profile of Respondents

Of the total cohort of supervisors (56), 20 participated in the survey.

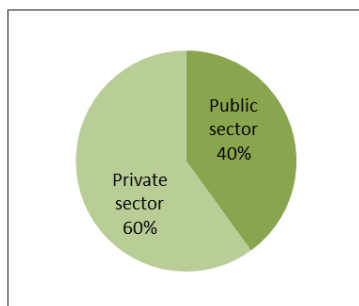
Employers	Number of Respondents	Response Rate
56	20	35.7%

Graduates' Work Experience

Employers and UWI graduates were engaged primarily in the Education sector (30%), with 40% of graduates working in the public sector and 60% in the private sector.

Most of the graduates who were evaluated held upper level positions such as professionals (45%) and associate professionals (25%). The remaining were in supervisory (10%), clerical support (10%) and service and sales (10%).

The majority (62.5%) of First Degree graduates were employed for 3 years or less in the organization while 12.5% of graduates were employed for 7 or more years. Twenty-five percent of graduates were unaccounted for.



Industry of Employment (2016)	N	%
Hotels and Restaurants	2	10.0
Financial Intermediation	2	10.0
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	1	5.0
Education	6	30.0
Health and Social Work	1	5.0
Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities	1	5.0
Manufacturing	2	10.0
Electricity, Gas & Water	1	5.0
Transport, Storage & Communication	1	5.0
Wholesale & Retail Trade	2	10.0
Extra-Territorial Organizations and Bodies	1	5.0
Total	20	100.0

Academic Preparation of UWI Graduates

Most graduates were hired based on their academic qualifications (65%) and work experience (15%) followed by specialized skills (5%).

Decision to Hire Graduates	N	%
Academic qualifications	13	65.0
Previous work experience	3	15.0
Specialized knowledge	0	.0
Specialized skills	1	5.0
Established networks and contacts in business	0	0.0
*Other	1	5.0
No answer	2	10.0
Total	20	100.0

*Graduate was employed before I joined the organization.

The majority of employers (90%) also felt that the University of the West Indies prepared its graduates sufficiently or better for the position.

UWI's Preparation of Graduates	N	%
Very Poorly	0	0.0
Less than Sufficiently	1	5.0
Sufficiently	14	70.0
More than Adequately	2	10.0
Extremely Well	2	10.0
No answer	1	5.0
Total	20	100.0

Graduates' Skill Sets

Employers gave positive ratings to First Degree graduates on a variety of skill sets. For each attribute, supervisors were asked to rate the UWI graduate on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent).

Employers gave high ratings to politeness (3.61/4), reading skills (3.56/4), accountability (3.53/4) as well as professional ethics (3.50/4), integrity (3.47/4) and willingness to learn (3.42/4), among others.

Areas accorded low ratings were related work experience (2.50/4), negotiation skills (2.83/4) and business management skills (2.88/4).

Performance of UWI Graduates

When asked to rate the performance of UWI graduates, 45% of employers were "satisfied," while 35% of employers were "very satisfied." Nearly all employers (90%) responded that they would continue to hire UWI graduates and recommend the hiring of UWI graduates to other employers.

Satisfaction with Performance of Graduates	N	%
Very Dissatisfied	0	.0
Dissatisfied	1	5.0
Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	1	5.0
Satisfied	9	45.0
Very Satisfied	7	35.0
No answer	2	10.0
Total	20	100.0

Suggestions for Improvement

Of the nine employers (45%) who suggested improvements, two suggested closer links with industry and more emphasis on practical rather than theoretical knowledge. Employers were also seeking more development in professional skills concerning the separation of personal and professional viewpoints, business conversational skills, and cross culture exposure. Skills in need of refinement included technical writing, and the writing of proper English. One employer thought the UWI was doing a fine job while another employer suggested more financial assistance to students.

Campus Response

As always, curriculum renewal remains an important thrust of the Campus.

Over the period 2012-13 to 2015-16, student participation in internships and practicums as part of their academic programme has increased from 1,116 to 2,022 students.

